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10 December 1962

NRO DECLASSIFICATION/RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS ON FILE

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Planning of Reconnaissance Operations

1. This is for your information in answer to your request of 7 December.

2. The requirements for a given overflight operation in terms of specific targets requiring coverage and of priorities are prepared on a community basis by the COMOR for USIB. The reconnaissance program is by directive responsive to, and only to, the requirements of USIB. Mr. Reber, who is assigned to the DD/R, is Chairman of this Committee, and Colonel May of the Air Force is Deputy Chairman and acts in the absence of Mr. Reber. In his capacity as Chairman, Mr. Reber is not the CIA representative. The DD/I supplies the formal membership and CIA requirements input to the Committee. At the present time [] is the DD/I representative, and he draws his guidance from all the DD/I offices, i. e., ONE, OCL, OSI, ORR, and in addition, where applicable, from the DD/P, i. e., [] in the Cuban situation. In developing detailed target information, a COMOR Working Group has been established which is Chaired by [] of ORR as the CIA representative. The operational people from CSA attend COMOR meetings as observers in order both to obtain a depth of understanding of the requirements which are to be levied on them and to provide any operational inputs which may be of assistance in developing requirements. In accordance with formal USIB action, the NRO has an associate member of COMOR, and the NRO receives all agenda and papers of the Committee.

3. In routine situations the COMOR-approved requirements are forwarded directly to the operational elements without formal USIB approval. However, in major new situations, in cases of disagree-

ment within COMOR, or whenever a member or his principal believes it to be desirable, the COMOR paper will obtain formal USIB action at the next subsequent meeting.

4. When the COMOR requirements are received by the operational element - and in the case of IDEALIST this is DD/R/OSA - the operations people prepare an operations plan designed to satisfy these requirements in the optimum manner with assets that are available. In the event that political approval has not already been obtained, DD/R/OSA will prepare the necessary papers for Special Group and higher authority approval. These papers include a flight plan as well as a summary of the various operational and risk factors involved. After checking with the DCI or DDCI, this proposal to the Special Group is signed off by the DD/R so as to leave the DCI free to take any position in the Special Group meeting itself. In accordance with the agreement with the DNRO, these Special Group action papers are forwarded directly to the Special Group with information copies to NRO rather than through the NRO for all operations which are of a continuing nature and do not involve any new problems or conflicts with other NRO programs. In this case, the DD/R is acting as the representative of the NRO. This was the procedure that was adopted for the continuing IDEALIST flights over Cuba during the summer. In cases where new programs are involved or where a variety of different NRO assets may come into play, the DNRO may submit the proposal to the Special Group. This was the case on 9 October when the over-all program for Cuban reconnaissance was presented by Dr. Charyk based on inputs from CIA, JCS, etc. After approval by the Special Group or higher authority, the operating agencies, CIA, JCS, etc. and not NRO, are responsible for the actual conduct of the operations.

5. In summary, COMOR and USIB concern themselves with responsibility for requirements and not with operations. NRO is responsible for programming. CIA and JCS are responsible for the planning and conduct of operations. I believe this division of responsibility is appropriate and should be continued.

HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.
Deputy Director
(Research)

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cc: DDCI
DD/I
Exec. Director

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